

FINAL REPORT

COMMITTEE OF CONCERNED COMMUNICANTS

CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW AND ST. MONICA

March, 1969

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Vestry
Committee Members

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Committee was formed by Father Davis in March, 1968, as a result of inquiries at a regular Vestry meeting about the future of the Church of Saint Andrew and Saint Monica and the Episcopal Church in general. The Committee was charged with formulating some specific recommendations about the direction of the Church and increasing attendance. Since March, there have been meetings every month with the exception of July, August and December. These meetings have been very informal and enlightening.

The Committee members are as follows:

Harold Clay, Chairman	Jacqueline Leonard
Jeannette Clay	Curtis Leonard
Carolyn Gaines	Delores Strand
Roscoe Gaines	

Many months have gone by since the formation of this Committee; and, without a doubt, many more will go by before some significant evidence of the Committee's recommendations can be realized. The most tangible evidence, of course, will be a substantial increase in the Church attendance.

This report presents the specific recommendations of the Committee of Concerned Communicants, which if implemented, will stimulate more interest in the Church's activities. Submission of this report to the Vestry completes the initial objective of the Committee.

It became quite obvious, however, during the meeting discussions that the members were very much interested in playing an important part in following up on the recommendations. Therefore, the Committee, in effect, will remain in existence and will submit to the Vestry follow-up reports which will include new ideas and expansions on the enclosed recommendations.

The objectives of the Committee are clearly stated in Section 2.0, and the meetings and projects which developed into the specific recommendations are covered in Section 3.0. Emphasis has to be placed on the implementation of the recommendations presented in Section 4.0, which is obviously the hardest hurdle to overcome and can only be accomplished with a "moving" leadership and substantial participation by the communicants.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this Committee is to make recommendations to the Vestry which will create more interest in the Church and substantially increase the weekly attendance. The Committee will also be concerned with the implementation of these recommendations once they are approved.

3.0 COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND PROJECTS

All of the Committee meeting discussions proved to be very fruitful and informative, and it is our hope that this experience and concern has been expressed explicitly in this report and will not be misinterpreted by the reader.

It was realized that criticizing past performances was a waste of valuable time and should not be the concern of the Committee. The most important point was to channel the Committee's energies and efforts in the direction of establishing a sound plan of action to develop some realistic recommendations that have a reasonable chance of being accomplished. In general, the recommendations reflect a need for a church program that is dynamic and a challenge to the spiritual and moral direction of one's life. These recommendations are presented in detail in Section 4.0.

The projects that the Committee conducted consisted of visits to several churches, to Saint Andrew's and Saint Monica's Sunday School, and a Parish Attitude Survey.

Church Visits

The purpose of the church visits was to determine the comparative conditions and status of other churches and to help the Committee formulate new proposals or to substantiate some of the already-planned recommendations. During the visits, the Committee members observed attendance, percentage of active young people, sermons, musical programs and financial status.

The churches visited were:

1. Camphor Memorial United Methodist Church
57th & Wyalusing Avenue
May 12, 1968
2. St. Thomas Episcopal Church
52nd & Parrish Streets
June 2, 1968

3. The Fifty-Ninth Street Baptist Church
59th & Pine Streets
May 26, 1968
4. St. Luke's Episcopal Church
Germantown Avenue above Coulter Street
May 19, 1968
5. The First African Presbyterian Church
Girard Avenue and 42nd Street
May 1968
6. Church of the Redeemer (Episcopal)
Brvn Mawr
March, 1968
7. Grace Episcopal Church
Ardleigh Street & Gowen Avenue
April, 1968
8. Church of the Advocate (Episcopal)
18th & Diamond Streets
May, 1968
9. Epiphany Episcopal Church
Carpenter Lane and Lincoln Drive
May, 1968

Copies of some of the churches' Sunday Bulletins have been included for information only.

The attendance in all of the churches but two was good. These two churches were Church of the Advocate and Epiphany Episcopal Church. In most cases there were very few young people in attendance. One exception, however, was St. Luke's, which had a significantly active youth group that was really an outgrowth of their ecolyte group.

In general, the musical program was composed of the familiar, standard hymns; and the choirs were large and very inspirational. The music was usually one of the high points of the worship service.

The visit to St. Thomas' Church was an interesting experience. As part of the closing exercises of a Youth Conference, a Modern Mass was conducted

for the 11 o'clock service. This was quite a challenge for the choir and the communicants to appreciate and enjoy this kind of service. The choir was accompanied by a trumpet, drums, bass and guitar.

The financial position of the churches varied from near bankruptcy to very sound. In some cases the churches were even able to make considerable contributions to various charitable programs such as SCLC's Poor People's Campaign.

Church School

The comments on the visit to Saint Andrew's and Saint Monica's Sunday School are based on the assumption that what was observed was typical of most Sundays.

Due to the lack of teachers, the classes were combined into one class consisting of twelve children. Their ages ranged from about five to twelve years old. Naturally, with this wide range of ages and interest, any attempt to teach religion is a hopeless cause.

Realizing that teaching any subject is a most challenging task, it is felt that being able to get any number of children to attend Sunday School under the present conditions is an accomplishment that should be applauded.

Most of the younger children were very uneasy and bored. Only a few girls maintained any kind of interest in what was being discussed.

The recommendations for a Sunday School program are discussed in Section 4.0.

Parish Attitude Survey

In order to determine the attitude of the communicants, a survey was conducted in November, 1968. The response, of course, would significantly influence the level of effort necessary to get the Church moving in the right direction.

The survey was made by sending a questionnaire to every member on the Church roll, with a stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed for returning. The total number of questionnaires mailed to 324 addresses was 409. A copy of

THE CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW AND ST. MONICA

Dear Member:

The following questionnaire has been compiled by a group of concerned parishioners. It is intended to help in the evaluation of the present status and future direction of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Monica. We would appreciate your full cooperation in completing and returning this questionnaire by November 27, 1968.

Please note that a stamped, self-addressed envelope has been enclosed for your convenience. Thank you.

Harold Clay	Jeannette Clay
Roscoe Gaines	Carolyn Gaines
Curtis Leonard	Jacqueline Leonard
Alfred Strand	Delores Strand

1. In what area of the city do you live?
West_____ Southwest_____ North_____ South_____
Germantown/Mt. Airy/West Oak Lane_____ Other (Specify)_____
2. Are there any children in your family? Yes___ No___
What are their ages? _____
3. Your age: 15-20 yrs___ 21-30___ 31-40___ 41-50___ Over 50___
4. Do you attend the Church of St. Andrew and St. Monica:
every Sunday___ twice a month___ three times a year___
other(specify)_____?
5. When you are absent from the Church of St. Andrew and St. Monica,
are you visiting another church? Yes___ No___
6. Are you in favor of more or less involvement of our Church
in the surrounding community activities? More___ Less___
7. Do you think the present Church program fits the needs
of your children? Yes___ No___

8. Would visits from the Priest influence your attendance and interest? Yes _____ No _____
9. Would you be in favor of our Priest being more vocal in such controversial areas as civil rights, juvenile delinquency, Vietnam, the generation gap, and Black Power?

Yes _____ No _____

10. Do you think there should be a change in the Sunday Worship Service? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Remarks: _____

the questionnaire is attached for information purposes.

Since an active participation by the communicants was of utmost importance, the effort to answer the questionnaire was made as easy as possible by limiting the questions to 10 and enclosing the return envelope. The cost of the envelopes and mailing totalled \$40, which was completely covered by the Committee. Unfortunately, a lot of this money was wasted because only 108 (26%) questionnaires were returned. This response, however, should not be surprising since it is in proportion to the number of members who regularly participate in the Church activities.

In the results of the survey listed below, three numbers are presented for each question. The first number is the number of answers received, the second is the percentage based on the number of answers, and the third is the percentage based on the total returns (all questions were not answered on all returns).

1. Out of 98 answers, 57(58%, 53%) live in West Philadelphia, 25(26%, 23%) in Southwest Philadelphia, 4(4%, 4%) in North Philadelphia, 0(0%, 0%) in South Philadelphia, 9(9%, 8%) in Germantown/Mt. Airy/West Oak Lane, and 3(3%, 3%) in other areas. There were 10 questionnaires without answers or 9% based on the total.
2. From a total of 96 answers, 48 (50%, 44%) have children in the family, 48(50%, 44%) have no children, and 12 unanswered (12% of total) questionnaires.
3. Out of 89 answers, the range of communicant ages was 2(2%, 2%) between 15 and 20 years old, 13(14%, 12%) between 21 and 30, 21(23%, 19%) between 31 and 40, 22(25%, 20%) between 41 and 50, and 31(36%, 29%) over 50 years old. Nineteen questionnaires were unanswered (18% of total).

4. There were 90 answered returns on the question of church attendance. 25(28%, 23%) come every Sunday, 27(30%, 25%) twice a month, 20(22%, 18%) three times a year, and 18(20%, 17%) other than the times specified. Eighteen (17% of total) were unanswered.
5. The total number of answered questionnaires was 94. 29(31%, 27%) indicated that they were visiting another church when they were not attending St. Andrew's and St. Monica's and 65(69%, 60%) were not. Fourteen (13% of total) questionnaires were returned without answering this question.
6. There were 78 answered returns and 76(97%, 70%) indicated they were in favor of more involvement in the surrounding community activities, 2(3%, 2%) indicated less, and 30(28% of total) did not answer the question.
7. The total returns on the question of the Church program and the needs of the children were 60. 22(37%, 20%) said yes, and 38(63%, 35%) said no. The remaining 48(45% of total) were unanswered.
8. The response to the influence of visits from the Priest on one's attendance was 39(45%, 36%) yes and 48(55%, 44%) no. The 87 answered questionnaires indicates that 21 were returned unanswered (20% of total).
9. Fifty-three (58%, 49%) are in favor of our Priest being more vocal on controversial subjects and 38(42%, 30%) are not. Seventeen failed to answer this question, which is 21% of the total.
10. Twenty-five (32%, 23%) were in favor of a change in the Sunday worship service, and 54 (68%, 50%) were not. Twenty-nine returns did not answer this question, or 27% of the total.

The following anonymous quotes are presented as a sampling of remarks from the questionnaires:

I would like very much to become more active in the church. I am a senior at Cheyney State College and am now student teaching. If I could be of any help with youngsters of the church, I would be glad to help since my major is elementary education. I would be willing to help with any program of the church concerning young people.

I think my Priest should call or visit the absentees more often. He could collect church dues.

Is this Committee really interested in seeing St. Andrew's and St. Monica's grow?? What, if anything do they hope to gain by this questionnaire? Will this be just another fly-by-night thing - are you really interested in St. Monica's and St. Andrew's or is it just for personal gain.

Believe me, I love St. Monica's more than anyone else or just as much as anyone on this committee and within myself feel that more should be done to keep the doors open. If you feel that Father Davis is not doing the job, don't you think the Bishop is the one to go to?

Father Davis is doing an excellent service to the community. In every way he is a great asset to the community.

When Priest is right, be with him - if you feel he is wrong, let him know it in private.

I have erased the phrase Black Power because I do not know what it means.

St. Andrew & St. Monica Church is more of a social club rather than a church. We seem to concentrate too much on raising money through other means than the pledge giving. The church has become a money-changer and is therefore dead. Social activities such as shows, dances, and cabarets should never be announced from the Pulpit....

The Sermon should be about current events and how everyday life is affecting the Christian...

I think the old service was nice. The service now is generally boring!!

One reason my attendance dropped was because the service and sermon were too dry and uninspirational.

No remarks and think this is all trash.

I have been a member of St. Andrews for 22 years. It seems as though since the merger, St. Andrew's parishioners have been put aside. Where are they? Just like all of the names of the people on the other side - all strange names to me. Who are you?

People who aren't in the status quo bracket are completely ignored and aren't made to feel a part of the church.

....I have considered joining another church but upon receipt of this questionnaire I felt that maybe a change shall soon come to my old church.

As mentioned previously, the returns were low considering the number of questionnaires distributed and the accommodations made to facilitate a large response. The only conclusion is that many parishioners are so disinterested in the present and future existence of the Church that responding to a questionnaire was too much of an effort.

The comments and conclusions based on the survey cannot be expanded to cover the entire membership. However, the Committee feels that it is valid to consider the answers to represent a cross-section of about 50% of the membership, or 200 communicants.

The Committee realized when formulating the questions that some of the more direct questions might discourage returning the questionnaire because of the longer answers required and, consequently, the longer time required to write the answers.

The survey questions were composed to help answer two basic questions:

1. If you do not attend church regularly, what is your primary reason for not attending?
2. What changes in the church program would be required for you to become a regular communicant?

The following comments will indicate how the survey results help to answer these two questions:

About 25% of membership attends church at least twice a month. When they are not attending Saint Andrew's and Saint Monica's, they are also not visiting another church. The survey results show that distance from the Church, family responsibilities and age are not prominent factors by themselves to influence attendance.

Of particular interest is that an overwhelming majority would like to see the Church become more involved in the community. Seventy percent of the returned questionnaires indicated that this is an important issue in the Church program.

Based on the survey, it can also be concluded that visits by the Priest should not be of prime concern since only 36% of the members said that these visits would influence their attendance.

The last observation is that there is a significant number of communicants who would like to see the Priest become more vocal on controversial subjects; however, they are not in favor of a change in the Sunday worship service.

The recommendations presented in the following section have been guided by the results of this survey and therefore emphasize community action by the Church leadership as the key to attracting more people.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are meaningless unless they are approved and put into effect. Therefore, the recommendations that are presented emphasize "how they should be put into use." These ideas were a result of many meetings, visits to several churches and, of course, the Parish Attitude Survey. The list is very long and it is realized that all of the recommendations cannot be started at once. Therefore, they have been generally categorized into long-range programs and short-range programs that require immediate attention.

The overall tone of the recommended programs is one, that the worship service (and the sermons in particular) become more relevant to current problems; and two, that the overall church program become more community-oriented. This requires a total commitment of the Church leadership to community involvement. The specific recommendations indicate what is meant by "more relevant" and "community oriented."

New committees or groups will not have to be organized since the Church already has, in effect, successful working groups in the form of Guilds and Fellowships. Therefore, rather than organize new groups just to handle these projects, each of the existing organizations could select one or more projects to direct and incorporate into their own program. The first step, then, after approval of any recommendation is to turn the idea over to one of the existing church organizations to direct.

Another general recommendation is to try to key the attendance to specific Sundays. For example, through the Priest and the Church organizations, emphasis would be placed on attending Church on a specific Sunday either for a guest choir, guest speaker or some other special event.

Immediate attention should be given to establishing long-range goals and an overall program for the Church. Objectives on community involvement, religious interpretation and communicant participation must be defined so that the scope of individual church programs will be integrated and planned to fit the needs of the entire program.

The Committee recognizes that some of the following recommendations are not new and may, in fact, be a part of the program of existing Church organizations. If this is the case, mentioning the recommendation in this report should not be interpreted as criticism of the organizations' performance. The only reason would be that the Committee is not aware of all of the activities of all the Church organizations.

SHORT-RANGE RECOMMENDATIONS

Church School

The Church School Program, ideally, is a feeder for the Church, providing beginning experiences of understanding the church services. It is the purpose of the Church School to provide a spiritual foundation as well as opportunities for citizenship development.

There are many suggestions that are brought to mind in order to give our Church School a new life. Some of these suggestions may not be feasible, but at least this is a start.

1. The time of Church School could be changed from 11:00 am to 10:00 am, so that the Church School teacher may be able to worship during the regular church service
2. The staff should be so organized that there is at least a teacher for each department. For example - nursery, primary, Jr. High, Sr. High and young adults.

3. There should be substitutes who could be called in case of emergency to take over a teachers job.
4. An alternating arrangement might be established where the teachers might alternate the Sundays
5. Transportation should be provided by members of the congregation for the teachers, if necessary, as well as the children.
6. Any parishioner should be recruited for the staff with in-service training sessions provided by the superintendent or a designated person.
7. The program should be continually evaluated in order to be consistent with the needs of the community, the Church and the Church School membership.

Youth Conference

The youth of today need an understanding "sounding board" and an informal atmosphere to express their feelings. One way to provide this kind of environment is to organize a conference and workshop specifically for the youth. The intent would be to help each other to crystalize their opinions on the major issues and questions faced by every single person.

The location of the conference should be on the church grounds, since one of the basic goals is to get more people actively participating in church. However, since the church environment may constrain the discussions, some of the sessions could be held at various homes or at Denbeigh.

This is one of the projects that requires immediate attention and planning. Since the Easter season is on the minds of most people, it seems likely that interest in church would be high at this time and should be capitalized upon. Therefore, some weekend immediately following Easter Sunday seems desirable.

Since this is a Youth Conference, the youth should completely "run the show" with the assistance of one of the church organizations. Included in the planning for this conference must be an estimate of expenses, and all expenses should be supplied for this ~~year~~ conference by the Church.

Visitation Program

Continuous personal contact by the Priest and Seminarian with every communicant is an essential ingredient in maintaining one's interest in the church. Even though it may take over a year to complete one round of visits, it should be done. The Priest or Seminarian should not be accompanied by any other church member because the discussions during the visits must be considered confidential.

All arrangements for the visits should be made by an assisting group. This group would be responsible for notifying the person to be visited and the Priest or Seminarian of time and place.

Obviously, this kind of project will increase travel expenses. Automobile travel allowances should be based on, at least, the rate of 8¢ per mile for church-related travel.

Guest Speakers

Talks on any subject from sports to sex should be presented at regular sessions. The purpose is for people to become informed and involved in the things that are shaping their lives and their children's lives. Almost as important is developing a dynamic interest in religion.

These talks would be held in the auditorium, probably once a month, immediately following the 11 o'clock service and a brief luncheon. There are many available speakers, so this will be no problem. The speeches should be publicized in the church bulletin, the newspaper, and any other church publication. Expenses may be about \$25 per session. This project should also be the responsibility of one of the existing church organizations.

Relevant Sermons

For most people, the sermon stands out as the highlight of the worship service. It is the layman's interpreted source of information from the Bible; and from it we expect many things. We expect God's word, God's life, His creations and His bequests to and expectations of us as 20th Century Christians. How else can those of us who love God receive Him in His proper perspective?

For these reasons it is imperative that our sermons be strong in their relation to our lives, to our problems, to our world and all of its ever-expanding challenges. How does God intend for us to cross these modern bridges and yet hold on to Him too. These are the questions that today's Christians find themselves asking - no matter who they are, if they are truly Christians in today's world, this question will present itself.

The results of the Parish Attitude Survey indicated that the majority of those responding feel a need for this modern guidance.

Some specific recommendations for future sermons are noted below:

Civil Rights	The Draft
Juvenile Delinquency	The Poverty Program
Vietnam	The Welfare Program
The Generation Gap	Black Power

This program should be considered short-range and used in coordination with a Membership Drive.

LONG-RANGE RECOMMENDATIONS

Retreats

A retreat is a period of retirement, chosen with a view to religious self-examination, meditation, and special prayer, lasting either three or seven days. The most appropriate place for a retreat is the Episcopal Center at Denbeigh, and the participation should not be limited to members of the Church. Good food and an interesting program would be an unbeatable attraction. The only drawback might be the expense. A large portion of the expenses should be covered by the church budget or at least the food could

be donated and prepared by the women of the Church. This project could be scheduled for a spring weekend.

Parish Consultation

The idea of this project is to acquaint every communicant with the occupations and possible contacts of the other communicants so that in cases where some help is needed for a particular problem, each member knows that he can get advice from a fellow communicant. This can be accomplished by simply adding the occupation to each member's name on the parish list. Some communicants may also be interested in serving as speakers to the congregation, offering information and advice in their field of work.

Visiting Choirs

The two most inspiring parts of the worship service are the sermon and the music. Since recommendations pertaining to the sermon have already been presented, comments on only the musical program will be discussed.

Participation by the members in the musical program is as important as listening to the choir. It is easier to become inspired when actually singing than by listening. Therefore, there are more demands on a choir to attract attention. People should not be passing notes and talking, or in general, not paying attention while the choir is singing.

One way of encouraging more interest in the music is to invite guest choirs to take part in our worship service. In this way, the mere fact that there is a change in the choir would attract attention. Sufficient notification of any guest choirs must be made so that the attendance will not be embarrassing.

The ultimate purpose is to establish a continuing program of constantly varying sounds that make the musical program an adventure in itself.

Facility Improvements

The basic concept of this recommendation is to solicit the parishioners to volunteer their services when making minor improvements to the church facilities or to donate furniture and objects of art for decorative projects. Improvements in each room could become a project in itself - from the second-floor offices to the lobby of the Church. If expenses are kept low, the projects can be accomplished without perturbing the budget.

Replacement of furniture, such as tables, lamps, chairs, etc., can be obtained easily from donations of used furniture from the parishioners. Decorative objects, such as sculpture and paintings, can be items either donated by the members or on loan to the Church from art school students who want their talents displayed.

The first step in getting this project started is to take an inventory of the present Church facilities and equipment and then generate a list of what new items are required and what ones need replacement.

Tasks such as cleaning up or painting a room could be done in the form of a work party, with meals furnished by the members, followed by religious discussions.

As mentioned in previous recommendations, this entire project should become a part of the program objectives of an existing church organization.

There are several more recommendations that will be only mentioned in this report and followed up in more detail later. These recommendations are:

- A Family-to-Family exchange program with other churches from the suburban communities
- A Summer Program for children, teenagers and adults, consisting of lectures, dances, concerts, and other forms of entertainment